

HOUSE RESOLUTION 10
By Ferguson

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend Kingston Police Officers Caleb Strayer, Charles Mullis and Police Investigator Pete Stinnet; Roane County Deputy Sheriffs Shamus Pio and Jerry Singleton; Kingston Firefighters Eddie Lentz, James Tipton and Captain Jody Tipton; Roane County Rescue Squad members Brian Grief and Eddie Jones and Highway Patrol Officer Keith Stout for meritorious service.

WHEREAS, the citizens of Tennessee are fortunate to be able to rely upon the day-to-day heroism and professional competence of the many law enforcement officers, firefighters, emergency medical personnel and rescue squad members who respond to various accidents and events that put lives at risk; and

WHEREAS, recently an eastbound automobile carrying six young adults left Interstate 40 and came to rest upside down in four to five feet of water in the median portion of the Lawnville Road exit ramp; the call concerning the wreck was dispatched over police and fire department radios as Kingston and Roane County officers were settling into their nightly routine; and

WHEREAS, Kingston on-duty police officers Caleb Strayer and Charles Mullis, as well as off-duty Police Investigator Pete Stinnet raced to the scene, arriving about three minutes after the call; they found the car almost fully submerged, with only the underside visible above the water, and one man climbing up the bank, yelling for help; and

WHEREAS, the first young man, soon joined by a second man emerging from the water, told the officers that four more passengers remained in the vehicle; the police officers, joined by Deputies Shamus Pio and Jerry Singleton from the Roane County Sheriff's Office and Kingston firefighters Eddie Lentz, James Tipton and Captain Jody Tipton, commenced rescue operations; and

WHEREAS, the rescuers found the car's power locks jammed and the roof crushed, and firefighter James "Thunder" Tipton and Police Investigator Stinnet attempted to open the rear door with the Jaws of Life tool; in the meantime, Officers Strayer and Mullis found an open window and were able to pull out two teenage girls and a boy; and

WHEREAS, by this time Rescue Squad members Brian Grief and Eddie Jones had arrived on the scene and joined Tipton in opening a door to discover the remaining girl trapped on the other side; the rescuers moved to the other side while officer Mullis talked to the girl and finally managed to open the front door, free the girl from the seat pinning her, and pull her to safety; and

WHEREAS, all of the vehicle's occupants were transported to Roane Medical Center, where most were treated and released; the driver was arrested by Tennessee Highway Patrol Officer Keith Stout for driving under the influence; and

WHEREAS, each of these law enforcement officers, firefighters and rescue squad members has served with courage and gallantry, performing duties with the utmost skill, dedication and professionalism, and deserves proper recognition for both professional expertise and unquestionable valor; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, that we hereby honor and commend Kingston Police Officers Caleb Strayer, Charles Mullis and Police Investigator Pete Stinnet; Roane County Deputy Sheriffs Shamus Pio and Jerry Singleton; Kingston Firefighters Eddie Lentz, James Tipton and Captain Jody Tipton; Roane County Rescue Squad members Brian Grief and Eddie Jones, and Tennessee Highway Patrol Officer Keith Stout for their meritorious service, professionalism and great valor in performing a challenging rescue and offer our thanks for a difficult job well done.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.